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8/12/74

Honorable William F. Walsh
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Congressman Walsh:

Thank you for your letter of August 1 with respect to a constituent's views about the recently signed Protocol to the ABM Treaty.

The ABM Treaty of 1972 prohibits the deployment of ABM systems or their components except at two deployment areas, one centered on a party's national capital area and the other in a separate area at least 1,300 kilometers distant containing ICBM silo launchers. The Soviet Union has partially deployed an ABM system around Moscow, and the United States has under construction an ABM system at Grand Forks, North Dakota, in defense of ICBM silos. However, neither party has yet deployed ABM systems or components in the second of the two ABM deployment areas permitted to it.

The Protocol to the ABM Treaty, signed in Moscow on July 3, will be submitted to the United States Senate for ratification. The text of the Protocol is available to the public, and I am glad to enclose a copy for your constituent, together with additional information about the ABM Treaty. The Protocol would amend the Treaty to limit each party to a single ABM deployment area at any one time. However, each side would retain the option to remove its ABM system and the components thereof from their present deployment area and to deploy an ABM system or its components in the alternative deployment area permitted by the ABM Treaty. This option may be exercised only once.

There is no agreement with the Soviets of any nature relinquishing our right to deploy an ABM system around the nation's capital. The Protocol to the ABM Treaty represents a further advance in the stabilization of the

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strategic relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. It reinforces the ABM Treaty provision that neither side will establish a nation-wide ABM defense nor a base for such a defense. As an integral part of the ABM Treaty, this Protocol will strengthen that Treaty and will contribute to a more stable and peaceful world in which the security of the United States is fully protected.

I hope you will call on me if you believe we can be of further assistance.

Cordially,

(SW)
Linwood Holten
Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations

Enclosures: As described.

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Cleared: PM/DCA - Mr. Flowerree
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